



Construction of Masculinity in Dewa 19's Songs “Deasy” and “Cintailah Cinta”

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ABSTRACT

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Masculinity has always been associated with traits inherent in men. In fact, masculinity also always adapts to culture, how culture changes then masculinity will change. Dewa 19 is a legendary band that has been present for more than 30 years in the Indonesian music industry, Dewa 19 often tells love stories between men and women. The song performed by Dewa always smells of masculinity. This research aims to find out how this song gives an overview of men who change along with the changing times. This research uses a qualitative approach with a semiotic method. This research uses two songs that each represent each period, Deasy represents the masculinity of the New Order period and Cintailah Cinta represents the masculinity of the post-New Order period. The results of this study show that Deasy's song represents masculinity that positions men as dominant figures which implies that women always depend on the presence of men as protectors and guardians of women, while in the song Cintailah Cinta the form of masculinity is more varied with a touch of Islamic and Sufistic values as a new form of masculinity inherent in men by appreciating the value of compassion, forgiveness and loving sincerely to their partners as God does to his servants.

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1. Introduction

Gender ideology is so powerful that it can influence all aspects of life, including music. The relationship between music and gender is deeply embedded in the social frameworks that influence and shape it. Representations of gender dynamics in interpersonal relationships are influenced by societal standards. Gender and the social structures that influence it cannot be separated from pop culture. Popular culture can shape and reflect masculinity values through movies, music and magazines.

Texts, such as music lyrics, serve as a means for individuals to express their experiences and emotions, or to communicate a particular perspective. The lyrics contained in a piece of music can be viewed through a biased patriarchal perspective. Music is a mainstream that is vulnerable to patriarchy. Song lyrics often portray women as sexual objects or as individuals who need protection. (Sholiha, 2023). The song “Sabda Alam” popularized by Ismail Marzuki in 1995 features lyrics that depict gender-biased masculinity as a manifestation of patriarchal cultural hegemony. The song's lyrical excerpt discusses the role of women and highlights the visible differences between men and women. The song illustrates the notion that men are born to be leaders and powerful, whereas women are generally considered fragile, delicate and pampered (Melani, 2008).

According to Barker (2007), the concept of masculinity in society continues to be influenced by a culture that is also always evolving, so the concept of masculinity in society is also considered to evolve following the dynamics of change in society. Masculinity is not a fixed and static concept, but

can change and adapt to different social and cultural contexts. Kimmel (2005) also explained that masculinity is a dynamic construction that includes several meanings that develop over time, relating to aspects related to men (manhood).

Eliyanah's (2017) research discusses masculinity in the Indonesian film industry. Before the 2000s, Indonesian films depicted the male protagonist as the dominant figure in the household, responsible for providing and protecting. Depictions of "Bapakism" were prevalent in films from the 1970s to the early 1990s. In the propaganda film "Betrayal of G30S/PKI" (1981). However, since the 2000s, there has been a shift in representations of masculinity, depicting men who are sensitive, refined, emotionally expressive, understanding of poverty, supportive of their partner's career, and willing to participate in household chores. For example, the movie *Ada Apa Dengan Cinta* (2002) displays a new form of masculinity through the character of Rangga. Rangga is portrayed as quiet and intelligent, non-confrontational, gentle, lyrical, and skilled at cooking.

In addition to movies, magazines can also be a medium where masculinity characters are formed based on the content raised. Sokowati's (2017) research on *Hai* magazine articles in the 1990s is closely related to the discussion of the discourse of militaristic masculinity. Military-style masculinity is associated with violence and represents a traditional form of masculinity characterized by physical strength such as muscle power. The portrayal of men in the 2000s edition of *Hai* magazine began to transition from adult men to teenagers. The hedonistic and consumptive tendencies of teenagers are evident through their engagement with music, movies, sports, fashion, relaxing places to hang out, and other forms of entertainment.

From the two studies above, it can be seen that the shift in masculinity involves time and space as Hall (1997) stated in the interpretation of discourse, the existence of domination and control causes the absence of a definite definition of sexuality. As well as the political regime in place at the time, gender and politics are interconnected topics. Gender relations are inherently political because they involve the division of power between men and women. Problems arise when there is inequity in the allocation of power, Masculinity is a product of the way gender is constructed in society. Unlike sex, which is determined by biological factors that cannot be changed at birth, gender is shaped by social and cultural constructions.

As well as the political regime in place at the time, gender and politics are interconnected topics. Gender relations are inherently political because they involve the division of power between men and women. Problems arise when there is inequity in the allocation of power, usually resulting in men being given a larger share of power while women are given a smaller percentage. As a result, a gender gap is created and projected onto men and women (Muryantini et al., 2020). During the New Order period, the state exercised various controls over some broadcasts. There was a lack of television mass media that openly tried to criticize the government. The same pattern also occurred with other mass media, including newspapers, songs, and magazines. However, after the fall of the old regime in 1998, the new government lost its ability to exercise control over decisions, social dynamics, and political behavior, unless they blatantly violated the country's constitution. As Indonesia has the largest Islamic population in the world, the Islamic community, which was highly dissatisfied with the government during the New Order era, now has a great opportunity to compete for leadership. Therefore, it is strategic and crucial for the Indonesian Islamic community to engage in the competition and spread the "mission of da'wah" through media platforms such as television and da'wah songs. (Salam & Budiyanto, 2005).

The construction of masculinity by Dewa 19 was influenced by the political, cultural, and Islamicisation that occurred in Indonesia during the New Order and Post-New Order periods. Taking this period is important because there were many changes in the meaning of masculinity that occurred during that time. The transition from the authoritarian New Order government to the democratic post-New Order regime brought consequences to changes in ideology, especially the transformation of masculinity. Changes in the construction of masculinity have an impact on the media's depiction of the prevailing ideology, which can be seen in the use of language, both written and visual, in various media products.

Masculinity ideology is a component of gender ideology that examines how the role and position of men in the structure and relations of society influences the content of Dewa 19's songs. This influence can be seen in the lyrics of Dewa 19's songs, which often explore themes related to romance

that explain the relationship between men and women, which in the New Order era represented traditional masculinity, while after the post-order era masculinity became more varied. In other pop culture products such as songs, it is interesting to be studied by the author in the same period of time as the changes in the period that caused the changes in masculinity that occurred.

2. Method

This research was conducted through text analysis techniques using the semiotic analysis method. The semiotic method is essentially a qualitative-interpretative approach that centres on the study of 'signs' and 'texts' as the main subject of investigation. In addition, this method also involves the analysis of how researchers 'interpret' and 'understand' the underlying codes that govern these signs and texts. Text analysis methods belong to interpretive methodologies (Piliang, 2004).

The research objects chosen were the songs 'Deasy' from the album *Format Masa Depan* (1994) and 'Cintailah Cinta' from the album *Cintailah Cinta* (2002). The research stages used include: (1) analysing and understanding the two Dewa 19 song lyrics; (2) selecting and evaluating each word in Dewa 19 song lyrics that contain masculinity values; (3) the selected words were researched.

3. Result and Discussion

In the new order era, the portrayal of men and women displayed in Dewa 19's songs always depicted men in control of women in the form of regulating how women should behave and how to be treated, in the song "Deasy" released in 1994. The song is found in Dewa 19's second album titled "Format Masa Depan". Along with the change of period from new order to post-new order in 2000, Dewa 19 underwent a change with the change of personnel and the release of the fifth album named 'Bintang Lima'. Bintang Lima album marked a striking shift in the writing of the lyrical content of Dewa 19's songs. The lyrics, which were previously thick with the theme of love between male and female individuals, experienced a subtle influence from the touch of Sufistic verses. This is evident in the song 'Cintailah Cinta' which contains Sufi principles.

3.1. Regulation of women's behaviour and sexuality

The oppression of women during the New Order era in Indonesia stemmed from the prevailing gender ideology of the time. Suryakusuma (2000) reveals that the New Order regime ruthlessly subjugated Indonesian women. The idea of state ibuisism entailed a mechanism of subordination, where women were positioned below men, which necessitated dependence and servitude to men.

a. Men as protectors of women

The military dictatorship led by President Soeharto was characterised by an overabundance of masculine authority, which was fixated on controlling and demanding obedience from women. (Clark, 2004). The idea of women as individuals in need of protection from men during the New Order era in Indonesia was closely linked to patriarchal social frameworks and government policies. The government subjugated women through the idea of state ibuisism, which combined Dutch bourgeois ideas of the household with Javanese priayi 'Ibuisism'. Men are stereotypically portrayed as controllers, leaders, protectors, and must be served, while women are seen as controlled, led, weak, in need of protection, and service providers for others (Widyatama, 2006). These stereotypes are created as the concept of Bapakism embodies a new order of masculinity that integrates the principles of Javanese priyayi and militarism, which is a form of masculine hegemony (Paramadhita, 2007).

The control of women's behaviour and sexuality by men at that time can be seen in the lyrics of the song 'Deasy' in line 10 which reads: 'Deasy akupun slalu ada di sini untukmu'. In line 10, the use of the word 'aku' can be interpreted as positioning themselves as Deasy's protector and guardian. This connotes that men assert themselves as dominant figures who are able to provide a sense of security to women, who are considered to always need their presence. The assertion in line 10 aims to perpetuate the notion that men act as protectors and guardians of women. In addition, it positions men as dominant figures who are able to provide security to women. This implies that women are often portrayed as meek, fragile, submissive, emotional, and dependent on male protection (Damayanti, 2009).

b. Objectification of Women

In a patriarchal culture, men are considered dominant and superior, while women are relegated to a lower status. This establishes a power dynamic where men hold control over women, especially in terms of sexuality. The family planning initiative enacted during the New Order era illustrates the transformation of women's bodies into instruments of government regulation. Women were forced to engage in contraceptive programmes designed to regulate their reproductive capabilities for national development. Udasmoro(2004) states that the New Order government's sustainable family planning initiatives were discriminatory. Women were considered the focal point of contraceptive use and the state's strategy to reduce population. The programme perpetuated the narrative that women were responsible for issues related to reproductive function.

Objectivity towards women is evidence of how men see women as in the lyrics of Deasy's song: *kucumbu indah wangi tubuhmu, di dalam lembutnya sentuhan jemarimu*. Denotatively, the statement indicates that 'aku' was caressing Deasy's fragrant body, accompanied by the sensation of Deasy's delicate fingertips. However, when analysed at the connotative level, the sentence expresses a man's fantasy of a woman's physique. The description of a fragrant body and soft fingertips implies his desire to find Deasy as a woman capable of capturing the hearts of men. In the next lyric: *nafasmu menyengat urat nadiku, yang tersesat di dalam harumnya rambutmu* making the scent and allure of a woman's hair overwhelm a man's mind, while her breath can evoke deep reactions in him. This shows that men are only attracted to a woman's physical attributes. Consequently, this sentence illustrates that Deasy's body is only used as an object of a man's pleasure. Men only see the physical aspects of a woman, including the scent of her body, the softness of her touch, the scent of her breath, and the fragrance of her hair, as forces capable of captivating his mind.

c. Women as fulfilers of men's desires

The idea of women's subordination to men perpetuates the oppression of women's roles. In Javanese society, women are referred to as 'kanca wingking', indicating that their role as wives is not beside men, but behind them, especially in the kitchen, as Javanese cultural norms state that the scope of a wife's activities includes the kitchen, well and bed. This illustrates the limited space for women to act and contemplate, limiting them outside of domestic duties (Sri & Sofwan, 2001).

The song lyrics *peluk aku, cium aku, cumbu aku, di puncak gairahku* describe a man begging Deasy to hug, kiss and caress him at the peak of his passion. This statement shows that women are not given the opportunity to experience peak passion or enjoy their own passion. Women are required to heighten men's arousal with hugs, kisses and caresses, even though the opposite is not required. It can be interpreted that men occupy an active role, while women are placed in a passive role, lacking autonomy and serving only to fulfil men's passion.

3.2. New male as alternative masculinity

After the New Order, the wave of Islamisation and Asianisation impacted Indonesian pop culture such as films, songs and other media products (Heryanto, 2015). The manifestation of religious symbols is part of the political diversity that emerged in the post-New Order era, where every aspect of culture and politics sought a platform for expression (Jati, 2015). This development, which began in the last years of the New Order, became more pronounced at the beginning of the reformasi era, marked by the establishment of explicitly Islamic political parties, demands for sharia law to be implemented nationally, and the emergence of militant groups, some of which engaged in sectarian violence. *Expressing Islam: Religious Life and Politics in Indonesia* seeks to analyze Indonesian Islam as a dynamic faith, where high piety is manifested through a variety of communal practices (Wood, 2008). During the New Order period, Indonesian society faced a prevailing rhetoric of masculinity under an authoritarian state. The collapse of the regime resulted in a new discourse on masculinity, influenced by Islamic culture and morals, as evidenced in songs that embody these principles.

As such masculinity also underwent a shift and faced a new masculinity with evolving Islamic values. Islam takes a Sufism approach to faith, which emphasises direct closeness to God (Allah) through deep spiritual practices, such as *dhikr*, contemplation and self-control. The articulated Sufistic values include a broader study of the romance between men and women perempuan (Yulianto, 2008). The essence of love as a fundamental value and Sufistic goal primarily centres on encouraging

individuals to understand love: its origins, its purpose, and the behaviour it engenders. This is evident in the lyrics of the song 'Cintailah Cinta'.

a. A Loving Man

During the New Order, men were associated with the da'wah movement, which proclaimed that the revered male role model was the Prophet Muhammad. Men have an idea of masculinity characterized by patience, kindness, and respect for women. Emphasizing the primacy of inner nobility over external characteristics of masculinity, such as physical appearance (Wulan, 2015). This notion of masculinity, which underlines emotional depth, accentuates aspects of Islam that value introspection and passive acceptance in the realm of Islamic mysticism (Sufism). In order to account for the feminine aspect of human consciousness, it deliberately omits the energetic and assertive characteristics usually associated with normative masculinity, such as dominance and physical strength (Ahmed, 2006)

Empathy towards fellow human beings is essential in Islam. For Muslims, genuine attachment among individuals is intrinsically linked to the principle of maintaining harmony in life. This notion is often associated with the phrases 'habluminallah' and 'habluminannas', which denote relationships with the divine and relationships between individuals, respectively. Muslims are required to uphold their relationship with Allah the Creator and with all fellow human beings without exception. One of the prerequisites for maintaining interpersonal relationships is mutual compassion (Mumtaz et al., 2022).

In the lyrics of the song Cintailah Cinta: Tuhan anug'rahi sebuah cinta, Kepada manusia untuk, Dapat saling menyayangi. The phrase 'Tuhan anug'rahi sebuah cinta' implies that love transcends human affection and symbolises divine love. In religious doctrine, particularly in Islam, love is often regarded as the ultimate gift from God to His creation, representing a manifestation of His compassion (mercy). It can also be interpreted as the manifestation of God in human existence, where love serves as a channel to understand and approach God. The lyric 'Kepada manusia untuk' is God's gift of love to man in this context is not just a passive gift, but also includes a moral obligation. Man is entrusted with the responsibility to spread this love to others. 'Dapat saling menyayangi' These words indicate that all individuals have the right and obligation to love one another. These words convey a moral message of equality, affirming that love transcends boundaries of status, class, or difference. All individuals deserve and should be equally rewarded, which potentially correlates with the principles of social justice in Islam.

b. Forgiving Man

This song from Dewa articulates that love comes from God and is manifested to humans as a "means" to foster compassion. The presence of love in humans can eliminate anger and resentment, fostering mutual forgiveness (Yulianto, 2008). Islamic masculinity as a forgiving man is a concept that describes the nature of masculinity based on Islamic values, especially in the aspects of forgiveness, patience, gentleness, and justice. This masculinity differs from conventional stereotypes of masculinity that often emphasize physical strength, dominance, or aggressiveness. In the Islamic context, ideal masculinity is associated with noble morals and behaviors that reflect the attributes of Allah, such as the Most Forgiving (Al-Ghaffar) and the Most Merciful (Ar-Rahman).

What is evident from the lyrics of Kita takkan bisa berlari, Dari kenyataan, Bahwa kita manusia, Tempatnya salah dan lupa is that humans cannot avoid the fact that they are creatures prone to mistakes and forgetfulness regarding past events. In the lyrics of 'Kita tidak akan bisa lari'. Running away (lari) is often an attempt to avoid responsibility or face problems. The lyrics imply that individuals cannot avoid their moral obligations, either towards themselves or others. This exemplifies human constraints in the face of existence, as individuals must face reality and cannot continuously avoid problems or mistakes that have occurred. From an Islamic perspective, this signifies that humans cannot avoid God's destiny or decree. In Islam, the idea that humans cannot avoid God's will is highly emphasized. This expression conveys the concept that everyone should accept their destiny and strive to improve themselves instead of avoiding the realities of life. The phrases 'Bahwa kita adalah manusia' and 'Tempatnya salah dan lupa' convey connotative meanings of human weakness, imperfection and frailty. This meaning suggests that imperfection is a natural human trait. The words convey that mistakes and forgetfulness are inherent to humans and should be recognized and accepted.

This understanding suggests that although humans often make mistakes and forget, they should consistently strive to correct these mistakes.

In the next lyric 'Jika masih ada Cinta di hatimu Maka, maafkanlah, Segala kesalahan ,Cintailah cinta' if someone still has love in their heart, they must forgive the mistakes of others and love love itself. 'Jika masih ada cinta di hatimu' 'maafkanlah, Segala kesalahan' lyrics describe sincerity and patience: The love referred to in these lyrics can be seen as a symbol of patience, forgiveness, and kindness that refers to the love given by God to humans, which encourages humans to apply the values of love in life, including forgiveness. Forgiveness allows humans to let go of pain and move forward with love in their hearts. It is a symbol of greatness of heart, where one not only forgives others, but also gains inner peace. Followed by the sentence Cintailah cinta' means to appreciate and celebrate the existence of love as a fundamental value in human life, as a uniting and harmonizing force between people including between male and female relationships.

The forgiving nature of men is an implication of the nature of God who always forgives his servants without exception, this can be seen in the lyrics: 'Tentu Tuhan pun akan memaafkan, Atas dosa yang pernah tercipta, Yang mungkin tak bisa diampuni' these lyrics mean the belief that even though the sins committed may be very large and difficult to forgive, God will still provide forgiveness. In Islam, God is portrayed as the Most Forgiving and Merciful, who is always ready to forgive the mistakes of His servants. Sin also carries connotations of opportunities for improvement and transformation. By confessing sin, humans open themselves to God's mercy and seek to improve themselves. It is a symbol that despite mistakes, there is a path to becoming better through repentance and apology. In the phrase 'Yang mungkin tak bisa diampuni', the human feeling is that they often doubt whether their sins are too big to be forgiven. This implies fear and doubt in humans towards sins that may be considered too heavy. However, in the context of these lyrics, despite the fear that sins may not be forgiven, there is a belief that God will still grant forgiveness.

These three lyrics reflect the changes that occurred in the concept of Islamic masculinity after the reformation period in Indonesia. Previously, masculinity was often associated with dominance, physical strength and social control. However, with the growth of the moderate Islamic movement and the opening of wider discussions about gender roles in society, a new concept of masculinity emerged that was more forgiving, gentle and spiritual.

4. Conclusion

This fluid masculinity also applies to the Indonesian context, which goes through two periods of New Order and Post-New Order, through media products such as music, masculinity is reflected according to what influences exist in that era. The portrayal of men in Dewa 19's songs changed when the era shifted from New Order to post-New Order in Indonesia. During the New Order era, men were portrayed as rulers over women, where women were expected to behave and be treated according to male rules. This was reinforced by the concept of state ibuisim, where women were positioned under men and considered weak and in need of protection, in addition to the objectification of women and the image of women as desire satisfiers was still very prevalent due to the prevailing regime at that time, namely, the New Order era. However, in Dewa 19's fifth album, 'Bintang Lima', there was a shift in the concept of the songs performed. The lyrics began to be influenced by Sufistic verses, which emphasized love and spiritual principles. Despite this shift, there are still elements of gender stereotypes present, such as men being portrayed as new men such as men who act in accordance with prevailing Islamic values due to the growing Islamization after the New Order.

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